

23 August – 6 September 2019

Archa Theatre, Prague,
Czech Republic

Application deadline

30 April 2019



**International
Summer School:
Theatre in Social
Context**

Archa Theatre Summer School

Archa Theatre promotes artistic practices that have the courage to examine topical issues expressed in a specific theatrical language.

The International Summer School is a platform for experimentation and investigation in the field of contemporary theatre.

Theatrical creation has focused on topical social and political issues.

The summer school promises students to get acquainted with theatre in social context with the help of Archa Theatre's artistic vision and advanced theatrical tools.

Working language of the school is English.

Issues we will focus on:

- How is reality transformed into an artistic image?
- Which artistic disciplines serve this purpose?
- How can artistic activities influence social reality?

Who are welcome to apply:

- Everyone who is older than 18, is professionally involved in theatre or who wishes to be in future.
- Everyone who is interested in the methods of the collective creation / devised theatre.
- Everyone who sees theatre as an expression of individuality on stage.
- Everyone who is interested in the principles of documentary and social-specific theatre.
- Everyone who sees theatre as a combination of artistic and technical disciplines.

The principles of the education:

- Instruction based on the principle of shared experience
- Respect for each participant as an independent creative personality

Ateliers:

- Jana Svobodová: The Viewpoints technique and textual sources of documentary theatre
- Jan Burian: Music and sound as an integral part of stage action
- Jaroslav Hrdlička: Stage-focused video and multimedia
- Philipp Schenker: Objects in the context of personal story
- Complementary atelier - Pavel Kotlík: Light as a space for action
- Complementary atelier - Zuzana Sýkorová: Dancing with reality: Body movement in social-specific theatre

Exclusive lectures:

Participants will also have the chance to attend exclusive lectures given by internationally acclaimed artists and scholars.

- Lola Arias: Reenacting Life
- Robert Palmer: Re-thinking Theatre Practice for the 21st Century
- Pieter De Buysser: How to create and stage your own text
- Henk Keizer: Theatre? Get out of the theatre!
- Ondrej Hrab: Theatre and sociology, Historical roots of social-specific theatre

Course structure:

Before the summer school starts, each participant will be assigned to one of the main ateliers considering their preferences. At the beginning of the summer school, all participants will attend common classes focussing on space, movement, sound and music. Then participants will attend the ateliers they were assigned to. After this period, they will form independent creative groups consisting of students from different ateliers. These groups will work on a short performance that they will present at Archa Theatre by using the theatrical skills they acquired from the ateliers they attended. During this creative process, all instructors will be available for artistic consultation. Besides this main program, all participants will be able to attend the exclusive lectures.

How to apply?

Please submit a motivation letter and a CV with a photo to the stated e-mail address. You can also include visual materials showing your work to date.

Applications should be submitted to:
summerschool@archatheatre.cz

Application deadline:
30 April 2019

Tuition:
600 Euro – includes daily practical exercises, lectures, study materials, lunch, refreshments, and tickets to the accompanying program at Archa Theatre

In exceptional cases, applicants can request a discount on the tuition.

Note:
There is a limited capacity for participants.

Selection of participants will be announced by 15 May 2019.





Here are some feedbacks from our participants

“Coming here taught me an entirely different approach to devised theatre. It’s a calm environment, with no pressure, and allows freedom of creativity.”

Millie Done
BA student in Goldsmiths University of London

“Those magical 2 weeks in Prague was such a life-changer; I got to do what I love the most in a fully-equipped, professional theatre, devise a beautiful performance with some of the loveliest people and had the chance to learn from and befriend some of the most inspirational people I have ever encountered. It taught me that theatre has the power to change the world in small but powerful moments, and a step at a time, in time; it reaffirmed my belief in social-specific theatre and all

its wonders. It gave me back my purpose and drive, which I will forever be thankful for!”

Rebecca Goh
BA student in Royal Holloway, University of London

“I would recommend this summer school to everyone that is interested in documentary and also political theatre. I think that this place helps to understand many things about that. Actually, to everyone who wants to break free from the classical form of theatre. Even if you don’t want to work with site-specific theatre on community projects, it still helps to get an inspiration to be more creative, see more, listen.”

Linda Rudene, BA student in Latvian Academy of Culture

“So lucky to meet many creative and lovely classmates. Love this summer school!”

Murong Wang, MA student in Shanghai Theatre Academy

“A brilliant opportunity for any artist! Challenging and inspiring – lots of ideas to further develop current projects and ideas for new ones, I’ve gone back and gone straight into projects with excitement and determination. Met incredible artists working in Archa and participants of the summer school. Loved it, thanks so much for an inspirational two weeks.”

Fionnuala Kennedy, Theatre-maker, Ireland

Main Ateliers

Jana Svobodová:

The Viewpoints technique and textual sources of documentary theatre

My atelier will focus on fundamental reasons for stage action.

We will examine this topic from two perspectives:

1. Perspective of physical presence on stage based on the Viewpoints technique.
2. Perspective of deriving and using a text for an action.

Through spatial improvisation and interviews, students will cultivate the ability of “extreme listening” as the basic impetus of artistic creation.

This work will steer students to see their presence on stage from the position of the performer, the author, the dramaturge, and the viewer.

Jana Svobodová is a theatre director and the founder of the Archa.lab – the educational program of Archa Theatre. She is also the artistic director of the Akcent – International Festival of Documentary Theatre. In her work, she focuses on productions that interconnect professional artists and representatives of specific social groups. Among others, she has collaborated with residents of South African townships, the hip hop community, recent immigrants to the Czech Republic, the Roma community, various communities in the USA, and others. Her productions have been presented at festivals in the Czech Republic and internationally.

Jan Burian:

Music and sound as an integral part of stage action

In my atelier, we will focus on:

- Listening, hearing, and paying attention as the 3 basic approaches to the sound design of a performance.
- Different ways of musical creation and different roles of music and sound in creative theatrical process.
- Recording and processing of audio material.
- Selection of appropriate technical means according to the needs of a particular theatre event and according to the artist’s abilities.
- Searching for a distinctive musical language.

The atelier is designed for both beginners and advanced learners. Musical or technical knowledge is not a prerequisite.

Jan Burian is a music composer and sound designer who collaborates with various theatre artists (Min Tanaka, Peter Schumann, Petr Nikl, Jana Svobodová...) and filmmakers (Pavel Koutecký, Václav Švankmajer, Martin Mareček...). He has been working with the therapist Marie Madeira for more than ten years, and he created music for two books she has authored. For the National Film Archives he has composed and recorded music for the restored film *Such is Life* and also for the complete restored filmography of the first Czech filmmaker Jan Kříženecký. He is a founding member of the bands Kyklos Galaktikos [rap/hip-hop/experimental] and tyto alba [electroacoustic/experimental].



Main Ateliers

Jaroslav Hrdlička: Stage-focused video and multimedia

In my atelier, I will focus on the use of video in the context of theatrical work. We will proceed from recording to processing and presentation of video on stage. I will develop this technical foundation further with each student separately. My goal is to broaden students' multimedia knowledge focusing on what they consider useful for their work. I will emphasize a diversity of resources and approaches, but we will also focus on ease of execution and easy grasp of the topic. It is my aim to give students an overview of the possibilities of multimedia in theatre, for them to be able to understand it and thus to think more easily about its use. My atelier will also include artistic disciplines such as live drawing on stage using a tablet, use of live cameras, use of projector as a light source, VJ-ing, video mapping, programming, animation, synchronization, effects, magic, illusions, etc.

Jaroslav Hrdlička is a multimedia and video art specialist, game developer, and animator. He graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts in Prague, in the atelier New Media. Since 2005, he has been experimenting at the intersection of video and theatrical language. Besides his collaboration in many theatre projects, he is also involved in fine art, music, videogame industry, and animated movies. He is a member of the project Kyklos Galaktikos and a part of Paperash Studio. He also worked for institutions such as Czech Television, Czech Statistical Office, and Prague Institute of Planning and Development.

Philipp Schenker: Objects in the context of personal story

We are surrounded by many different kinds of objects every day. We use many of them regularly, some only on special occasions. They are an important part of our life and become our partners. Some objects can be part of our daily rituals, some can be objects of worship, some can be tied up with our memories, and some might be just found on the street, as they lost their original function. In my class I want to explore with you how these different kinds of objects are connected with our or other people's life stories. We will explore by different forms of stage actions what stories they can tell, how we can transform their use and meaning, and how we can use them for very different kinds of activities on stage. We will search for the metaphor that an object can express in relation to the story, the space, and the personal presence.

Philipp Schenker is a performer, musician, and artist based in Prague, originally from Switzerland. He studied Graphic Design in Zurich, and got involved in object and physical theatre in the Netherlands afterwards. As a performer and co-writer, he worked with Dogtroep, Grif-theater, SILO-theater, and other Dutch theatre companies. In Prague, he has been collaborating with Archa since 2008, besides co-founding the theatre unit Stage Code and the Czech-German cabaret Das Thema. He co-created and directed projects for the festival 4+4 Days in Motion and the European platform In Situ. For the last few years he has been teaching at the Prague Theatre Academy.



Complementary ateliers

Pavel Kotlík:

Light as a space for action

This atelier focusing on the specific use of light in theatre will complement the ateliers *The Viewpoints technique and textual sources of documentary theatre* and *Objects in the context of personal story* ateliers. Pavel Kotlík introduces the principles of light design in the context of working with space, text, movement, and object. Each student will have the opportunity to get acquainted with the technical principles of light design, after which they will create their own lighting plan.

Pavel Kotlík is a light designer and light technician. He worked at Theatre Řeznická, Prague Chamber Ballet or Ponoc Theatre, and cooperated on projects of Jaro Viňarský, Farma v jeskyni, Teatr Novogo Fronta. Since 2011 he has collaborated with Archa Theatre on several projects directed by VerTeDance and by Jana Svobodová. In 2012 he won the Award for Light Design for VerTeDance performance *Lost and Found*. He has been dedicated to lighting since his youth, he passed smoothly from school to theatre, first as a theatre technician, therefore he refers to himself as a theatre maker rather than a light designer. In the professional community, he is known as a tireless creator of visual compositions on stage – only few can paint surfaces and accentuate details as he does.

Zuzana Sýkorová:

Dancing with reality: Body movement in social-specific theatre

The focus of this atelier will be the communication between body and major components of theatrical work. To investigate the communication with space, we will raise awareness regarding our static and kinetic postural habits and work on correcting the habits that might block this communication. Another important part of this atelier will be discovering the conversation between body on stage and audience. Regarding this, we will work on the meaning of posture and gesture with regard to the concept of “intention”.

Zuzana Sýkorová is a dancer and choreographer who collaborates with various theatre artists (Min Tanaka, Peter Schumann, Jiří Adámek, Miroslav Bambušek...). She is the deputy head and teacher in Duncan Centre Conservatory in Prague. She teaches Duncan technic, improvisation, creation and theory of dance, besides giving workshops for dancers, actors, and dance instructors.



Experts of the Exclusive Lectures

Lola Arias

is a writer, theatre and film director, and performer. She collaborates with people from different backgrounds (war veterans, former communists, Bulgarian children, etc.) in theatre, literature, music, film and art projects. Her productions play with the overlapping zones between reality and fiction. Since 2007, she develops her theatrical work in the field of documentary theatre. She also created the exhibition *Stunt Double* [2016], the durational performance *Audition for a Demonstration* [2014], and the site-specific project *Ways of walking with a book in the hand* [2017]. Her feature film *Theatre of War* [2018], starring the same protagonists as her theatre project *Minefield*, was selected for the 68th Forum of the Berlinale Film Festival. Together with Ulises Conti, she composes and plays music, and together with Stefan Kaegi, she developed the projects *Chá-cara Paraíso* [2007], *Airport Kids* [2008] and *Ciudades Paralelas* [2010], a festival of urban interventions. She published poetry, fiction and plays. Lola Arias' works for theatre have been performed at many festivals and venues all over the world.

Robert Palmer

is an expert international consultant on cultural policy and strategy, and festivals/events. He started his career as a theatre director. He was Director of Culture and Cultural and National Heritage for the Council of Europe. Prior to this, Robert was Cultural Director for the City of Glasgow and Theatre and Dance Director of the Scottish Arts Council. He advises UNESCO, European Commission, United Cities and Local Governments (Agenda 21 for Culture), Eurocities, and different European cultural Institutes and networks. He was the Director

of two European Capitals of Culture (Glasgow and Brussels), and has advised 15 other cities who have been awarded this prestigious cultural title. Currently, he has projects in Greece, Italy, Ireland, the Netherlands, Azerbaijan, UK, and Canada. Recently he was commissioned to evaluate the role of culture in city resilience (part of the Rockefeller Foundation's 100 Resilient Cities initiative). He is a member of various artistic boards, including the Board of Archa Theatre, Prague.

Pieter De Buysser

is a Dutch-speaking writer, who lives and works in Brussels. His novel *The stonecutters* was published in Czech by Argo in June 2016, and he has written over 25 texts for theatre and performance. His work has been described as "a tribute to critical thought, humour, and the art of narration" (Cobra, Belgium). Besides writing for performance, theatre and film, he directs internationally acclaimed theatre productions like *Book Burning*, *Landscape with Skiproads*, *The Tip of the Tongue*, or *The Decoy*. His short films have received awards in numerous film festivals. While being highly aware of current social, political and human issues, he constantly reflects and questions our day-to-day presence. A co-production with Archa Theatre, *The After Party* explores the legacy of Vaclav Havel on the backdrop of today's Europe. He has received the Emile Zola Prize, the "Dwar-denker" Trophy, and the "Kleine Marie Hartman-pen". His shows are regularly invited to the most influential festivals throughout Europe.

Experts of the Exclusive Lectures

Henk Keizer

is a Dutch program maker, consultant. He works as co-ordinator of Rural Forums, which initiate art works about rural issues and focus on the role and function of art in rural development. Rural Forums aim to connect different groups of (urban and rural) people. He is an expert in site- and social-specific arts, and a promoter of participative and collaborative arts practices. He was the first director of Leeuwarden / Friesland 2018 (European Capital of Culture), managing director of the The Treaty of Utrecht and the Oerol Festival. As the director of the famous Dogtroep he produced various projects all around the world. During his period, the Dogtroep focused on working in "living locations where social friction can be felt". Not in abandoned factories but at places holding stories of people who live and work there, where current social, economic and moral issues come to the surface. Such projects were created and performed for example in prison in Bruges or the inland border crossing in the Passengers Terminal Amsterdam. In the last five years he has created an art organization and a network of artists who are interested in participative and collaborative art practices, in rural and urban areas. Starting point for this project is the unacceptable fact that many people in our society - especially on the countryside- are unheard and unseen. A vision he shares with Archa Theatre. In his work he enthusiastically quotes the writer John Berger: "Listening is an active act".

Ondřej Hrab

is the director of Archa Theatre. He graduated from the University of Economics in Prague, and in the following years he worked as a sociologist. Under the communist regime he was active in non-conformist cultural activities. He initiated and organised clandestine performances by foreign artists, including The Living Theatre and the Japanese dancer Min Tanaka. In 1991, he became the director of the E. F. Burian Theatre in Prague, transforming this traditional repertory theatre into a contemporary cultural centre under the name "Archa Theatre". Since Archa Theatre's opening in 1994, he has continued to introduce contemporary performing arts to the Czech Republic, bringing renowned international artists to the country, and also developing Archa's own cross-genre artistic projects. He has also been an active member of various national and European councils and groups that work on the topic of cultural exchange and networks.



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